

HEMYOCK *Baptist Church*

HAPPY NEW YEAR..... *The Lord is Near!*

Philippians 4: 4 *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!* ⁵*Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.* ⁶*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

As we come to the last few days of 2009, what encouragement can I share as we end the decade and enter the next? I want to encourage us to be thankful! Thankfulness is at the heart of rejoicing. Thankfulness is surely a thing we determine to do, despite our circumstances. Whether it is my natural state to be thankful, or whether I need a little encouragement, or whether thankfulness and I are only fair-weather friends, how can I achieve a level playing field of thankfulness on most occasions and in most circumstances? Our passage helps us. We are commanded by scripture to rejoice. Is rejoicing, and thanksgiving, transitory and therefore reserved for special application – such as a successful day at the office, a new baby born, an achievement of some sort, a friendship renewed, wealth and health acquired and so on? Paul says rejoice and then he repeats himself “I will say it again: Rejoice!” Now Paul was a man who so often appeared to have absolutely nothing to rejoice about and here he is commanding the rest of us to rejoice! But what does he know about my hard life, my disappointments, my challenges? Well actually, he was beaten, taken up dead, shipwrecked, criticised and lied about and he says if I can do it so can you - ‘Rejoice!’ and I say it again Rejoice! Paul’s faith in God and his nearness to him was what he was convinced of and he declared it by rejoicing – always! To rejoice and give thanks is obviously not some grin and bear it attitude or mind over matter, it is greater than our wills alone. To rejoice and give thanks is a Godly quality born out of relationship rather than a fierce-some rectitude. For Paul says rejoice – not just in circumstances, situations or troubles – yes rejoice in these, but never without doing so IN THE LORD! For that is what Paul says “Rejoice in the Lord”. In other words, find yourself in God and say of your circumstances “I will rejoice and give thanks in the Lord” according to the strength which he gives to me. David said “*My soul will boast in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice*”. Establish yourself as one who is in the Lord! If there was any phrase we should pin up above our work place, next to the kitchen sink or on the dashboard of our cars, the words “the Lord is near” must be it. What a thrilling and joy bringing piece of truth to carry into 2010 - “the Lord is near”.

Steve

January 2010

SUNDAYS

MORNING 11.00am

3rd Jesus Calls

Farewell to Ray & Becky

10th Jesus our model

17th Family Service –

Jesus calls us to go.

24th Jesus gives us gifts

Communion

31st Jesus goes with us

EVENINGS 7.00pm

Bible Studies

3rd Communion

DID YOU KNOW?

Our Jumbo Christmas Card appeal for the roof on Isaias’ new church building in Peru reached a fantastic £1250. Our collection for Ray & Becky’s leaving gift reached just over £400 as we go to press.

HEMYOCK MEN

Change of plan January

Professor Barry Jennings is postponed for January and Hemyock Men will be encouraged to attend the Adrian Plass event.

A never to be forgotten evening with author



Adrian Plass

HUMOUR, POETRY AND STORY-TELLING

Saturday 30th January at 7.30pm
Throgmorton Community Hall,
Dunkeswell TICKETS £5

YOUTH & CHILDRENS WORKER

Please continue to pray regarding someone to join us. We will advertise and contact colleges again. In the meantime, various people are taking more responsibilities: Stuart & Wanda will lead *Rock the Boat*; Joan will lead the *Hizone* group and Steve will coordinate *Crusaders*.

NEW YEARS CELEBRATION

MUSIC+PROSE+SONG

Soprano **Lynn Morgan**

Actress **Anna Sutherland**

Music **Dan Morgan**

SATURDAY

2nd January 2.30pm

SPONSORED BY

HEMYOCK WOMEN

LEE ABBEY 21-23 May 2010 An all-age “get away” weekend of fellowship and relaxation to one of the most beautiful coastlines in Britain! Our friend Steve Brady will be with us and there will be special youth and children activities. Please speak to Anne S. about making your family reservation.